

HERSETH SANDLIN MEETS WITH SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS GENERAL ERIC K. SHINSEKI

Washington, DC, January 21, 2010 –Today, Chair of the House Veterans' Affairs Economic Opportunity Subcommittee, Rep. Herseth Sandlin met with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, General Eric K. Shinseki, to discuss their priorities for veterans this year. Topics of the conversation included the continued efforts to successfully implement the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill and limit any delays veterans encounter while waiting for educational benefits, as well as the need to ensure the various employment assistance programs within the VA, such as Vocational Rehabilitation and Education, are meeting the needs of veterans in South Dakota and across the nation.

"Since Secretary Shinseki took office one year ago, he has been accessible and engaged," Rep. Herseth Sandlin said. "No one denies that changes and improvements to the benefits our veterans receive are necessary, and General Shinseki has committed himself to this goal."



Secretary Shinseki and Rep. Herseth Sandlin meet to discuss priorities for veterans in 2010

Rep. Herseth Sandlin and Secretary Shinseki discussed a number of issues that impact South Dakota veterans. They spoke about the need to make visible and concrete progress toward reducing the claims backlog, and adequately funding health care initiatives that will help improve the access of veterans in rural communities to VA services. Rep. Herseth Sandlin also emphasized the need to provide transition assistance to servicemembers who are retiring from active duty, especially for servicemembers who are separating from the Reserves or National Guard.

"I have worked with the Secretary for the past year, and he continues to be responsive to the issues facing South Dakota veterans," Rep. Herseth Sandlin said. "I was pleased that he was able to visit South Dakota in August and look forward to making progress with him on important issues to South Dakota veterans such as employment and access to services in rural areas."

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